

Inmate scales jail fence, caught hours later

Written by By Kimberly A. Gaona
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A criminal with a long rap sheet and considered extremely dangerous by police was free to roam the streets of Gallup for more than five hours after he scaled the fence at the McKinley County Adult Detention Center June 24 .

The escape call came into Metro Dispatch at 1:17 pm. After five hours of hustle and searching, Ryan Westman, 23, was apprehended with Angel Kuilan, 33, of Gallup and without incident a little before 6:30 pm at a traffic stop by Subway east.

Westman is no stranger to the law, according to New Mexico Courts website. He has a long list of court appearances and charges ranging from traffic violations and resisting arrest to the most recent aggravated burglary and kidnapping.

According to Gallup Police Capt. Rick White, Westman was in custody at the jail where they served the warrant on him stemming from a home invasion which took place June 16 in the Mossman area. He had reportedly broke into a house, tied up and battered the homeowner and burglarized the residence.

While Gallup Police officers may have originally taken him into custody, once Westman scaled the fence of the detention center, he became top priority for the McKinley County Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Ron Silversmith said that the whole thing played out "very fast."

"This was a very dangerous individual," Silversmith said after the capture. "It worked out well,

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nobody was hurt.”

While Westman was apprehended without incident, Silversmith said that they were making arrangements to place him in a “more secure facility” while he awaits his court hearing.

McKinley County Attorney Doug Decker said that he was briefed on the incident last night by Silversmith.

“The way I understand it, he scaled the fence and used his orange jumpsuit to cover the razor wire,” Decker said.

Westman will now have to answer to the escape charges along with the aggravated burglary and kidnapping. Westman isn’t the only one who will have to answer, as the county investigates whether or not policies and procedures were followed or simply failed to allow this escape to happen, according to Decker.

“This is all under investigation,” Decker said.

Decker also said that the investigation will cover everything including any improvements that need to be made to the building itself, and whatever is needed to be done to prevent this from ever happening again.

According to law.justia.com, aggravated burglary is classified as a second degree felony, kidnapping is either a first or second degree felony depending on the harm done to the homeowner while being held against his will.

Escape from jail is classified as a fourth degree felony in New Mexico. A first degree felony of kidnapping is punishable by up to 18 years in prison and a fine of up to \$15,000.

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A second degree felony of kidnapping is punishable by up to nine years in prison unless there are extenuating circumstances such as that it resulted in a death. Aggravated burglary holds the same possible punishment of imprisonment for up to nine years and a fine of up to \$10,000.

Kuilan could also be facing jail time for aiding and abetting in his escape.